



Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report

September 2003, NCJ 194820

National Crime Victimization Survey, 1993-2001

Weapon Use and Violent Crime

By Craig Perkins
BJS Statistician

Estimates from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) indicate that between 1993 and 2001 approximately 26% of the average annual 8.9 million violent victimizations were committed by offenders armed with a weapon. About 10% of the violent victimizations involved a firearm.

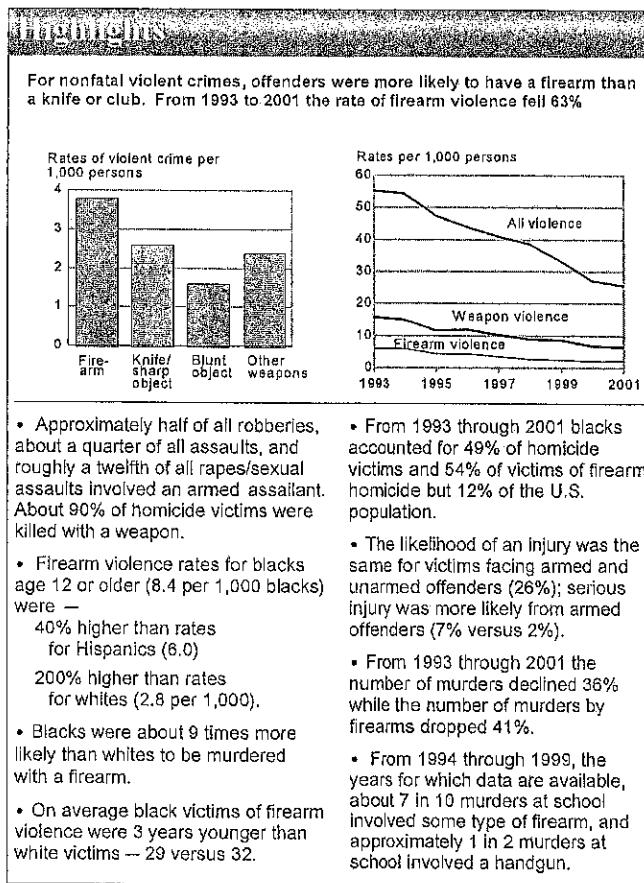
From 1993 through 2001 violent crime declined 54%; weapon violence went down 59%; and firearm violence, 63%.

Males, American Indians, and Hispanics, the young, and those with the lowest annual household income were more vulnerable to weapon violence in general and firearm violence in particular than their respective counterparts.

For the 9-year period beginning with 1993, 23% of white victims of violence and 36% of black victims were victims of violence involving an offender armed with a weapon. About 7% of white victims and 17% of black victims were involved in incidents in which an offender was armed with a gun.

Forty-five percent of all violence with a weapon involved victims between ages 25 and 49, and 38% involved victims between ages 15 and 24.

Blacks were about 9 times more likely than whites to be victims of gun-related homicides (25 per 100,000 blacks age 12 or older versus 3 per 100,000 whites.)



While victimizations involving knives comprised 6% of all violent crimes resulting in an injury, these victimizations accounted for about 24% of all serious injuries experienced by crime victims.

Type of weapon	Violent crime		
	With/without injury	Serious injury	Minor injury
Total	100%	100%	100%
No weapon	66	37	72
Any weapon	26	57	23
Firearm	10	13	4
Knife/sharp object	6	24	4
Blunt object/other	10	20	14
Do not know*	8	6	5

Note: Data from cases for which injury information was available.

*Victim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

The most common locales for armed violence and gun violence were the streets: those away from the victim's home (30% of violence with a weapon and 35% of gun violence) and those at or near the victim's home (27% of armed violence and 25% of gun violence).

Most violence involving a weapon and most firearm violence occurred while the victims were engaged in leisure activities away from home (27% and 27%) and commuting to work (23% and 25%, respectively).

Weapon use varied by type of crime. Offenders had weapons in about half of robberies, a fourth of assaults, and a twelfth of rapes/sexual assaults (table 1).

Weapons and violent crime

Between 1993 and 2001, about 26% (or an annual average of 2.3 million) of the estimated 8.9 million violent crimes in the United States were committed by offenders armed with guns, knives, or objects used as weapons. Firearm violence accounted for 10% of all violent crimes; about 6% were committed with a knife or other sharp object such as scissors, ice pick, or broken bottle; 4% with blunt objects such as a brick, bat, or bottle; and 5% were committed with unspecified/ "other" objects used as weapons.

Type of weapon	Average annual victimizations	Percent of —
	All violent crime	All armed violence
Total	8,898,460	100%
No weapon	5,863,750	66%
Any weapon	2,304,340	26%
Firearm	846,950	10
Handgun	737,370	8
Other gun	100,470	1
Type unknown	9,110	0
Knife/sharp object	589,990	6
Blunt object	356,340	4
Other	424,160	5
Unknown	106,890	1
Do not know*	728,370	8%

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Victim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

Table 1. Weapon use, by type of violent crime, 1993-2001

Type of weapon	Homicide	Rape/sexual assault	Robbery	All assaults
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Any weapon	91	8	50	24
Firearm	70	3	27	8
Knife/sharp object	13	3	13	6
Blunt object	5	1*	5	4
Other	3	1	5	6
Do not know*	4	7	11	8
No weapon	4	85	39	69

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology*, page 11.

*Victim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)

The NCVS is the Nation's primary source of information on criminal victimization. Data are continuously obtained from a nationally representative sample of approximately 43,000 households comprising nearly 80,000 persons age 12 or older. Household members are asked about the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of victimization.

The survey enables the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) to estimate the rate of victimization for rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, robbery, assault, theft, household burglary, and motor vehicle theft. The rates describe the vulnerability to crime by the population as a whole as well as by segments of the population such as women, the elderly, members of racial and ethnic groups, and city dwellers.

For the most current estimates of criminal victimization in the United States, see *Criminal Victimization 2001: Changes 2000-2001 with Trends 1993-2001* <www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs>.

Table 2. Violent crime, by type of weapon, 1993-2001

Violent crime	All crimes	No weapon	Any weapon	Firearm		Knife/ sharp object	Blunt object	Other weapon	Unspecified type of weapon	Do not know*
				All	Handgun					
Percent										
All nonlethal violence	100%	65.9%	25.9%	9.5%	8.3%	1.2%	6.4%	4.0%	4.8%	1.2%
Rape/sexual assault	100	84.9	8.0	3.4	3.4	0.0*	2.8	0.7*	0.5*	0.6*
Robbery	100	39.2	49.7	26.8	25.1	1.7	12.8	4.7	3.7	1.7
All assaults	100	68.5	23.6	7.5	6.3	1.2	5.7	4.1	5.1	1.2
Rates†										
All nonlethal violence	40.3	26.6	10.4	3.8	3.3	0.5	2.6	1.6	1.9	0.5
Rape/sexual assault	1.7	1.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0*	0.0	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*
Robbery	4.5	1.8	2.2	1.2	1.1	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.1
All assaults	34.2	23.4	8.1	2.6	2.2	0.4	2.0	1.4	1.7	0.4

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Based on 10 or fewer sample cases. See *Methodology*, page 11.

*Victim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

†Rates per 1,000 persons age 12 or older.

2. Weapon Use and Violent Crime

Definitions of weapons			
Firearms include handguns (pistols, revolvers, derringers) and shotguns, rifles, and other firearms (excluding BB and pellet guns and air rifles).			
Sharp objects include knives and other sharp edged and/or pointed objects (scissors, ice picks, and axes).			
Blunt objects include rocks, clubs, blackjack, bats, and metal pipes.			
Other weapons include ropes, chains, poison, martial arts weapons, BB guns, and objects that could not be classified.			

Firearms

Between 1993 and 2001 victims were confronted by offenders armed with guns in about 27% of robberies, 8% of assaults, and 3% of all rapes/sexual assaults (table 2).

U.S. residents were victims of crimes committed with firearms at a annual average rate of 4 crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older. Of the average 847,000 violent victimizations committed with firearms, about 7 out of 8 were committed with handguns.

Type of firearm	Average annual number	Percent	Rate per 1,000 age 12 or older
Total	846,940	100%	3.8
Handgun	737,360	87	3.3
Other	109,580	13	0.5

Knives and sharp objects

Annually during the 9-year period, about 570,000 violent victimizations were committed with a knife or other sharp object, accounting for 6% of all violent crimes. Thirteen percent of robberies, 6% of assaults, and 3% of rapes were committed with a knife or other sharp object.

From 1993 through 2001 crimes involving knives or sharp objects were committed at an average annual rate of 3 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older. In 85% of these victimizations, about 482,000 annually, the weapon was a knife. In the remainder, about 88,000 victimizations per year on average, the weapon was another type of sharp object.

Type of sharp edged weapon	Average annual number	Percent	Rate per 1,000 age 12 or older
Total	569,990	100%	2.6
Knife	481,870	85	2.2
Sharp object	88,120	15	0.4

Blunt objects

Armed with blunt objects such as bats, sticks, rocks, clubs, or blackjack, offenders committed approximately 356,000 violent crimes as an annual average from 1993 through 2001.

Crimes by offenders armed with blunt objects were committed at an annual average rate of 2 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older.

Other weapons

Between 1993 and 2001 about 5% of all violent crimes were committed with weapons other than guns, knives, or blunt objects. Such weapons include ropes, chains, poison, martial arts weapons, BB guns (not considered to be firearms by the NCVS), and objects that could not be classified.

Weapon use and crime outcome

Weapon use varied by crime. Robberies, followed by all assaults, were more likely to involve an armed assailant while rape/sexual assault was the least likely.

Robbery

Armed robberies were more likely to be completed, resulting in loss of property, than unarmed robberies. Higher completion percentages occurred for robberies committed with firearms than for robberies with knives and other sharp objects or blunt objects/other weapons. Robberies committed with knives and unarmed robberies were completed at similar percentages.

Type of weapon	Robberies, 1993-2001		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
All robberies*	100%	66%	34%
No weapon	100	60	40
Any weapon	100	71	29
Firearm	100	79	21
Knife/sharp object	100	57	43
Blunt object/other†	100	67	33

*Includes victims who did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

†"Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

Assaults

All assaults in this report represent simple and aggravated assault examined together.

Simple assault is an attack *without* a weapon resulting in either no injury or minor injury.

Aggravated assault is an attack or attempted attack with a weapon, regardless of whether an injury occurred and attack without a weapon when serious injury results.

All assaults	100%
Aggravated assault	27
Involved a weapon	26
Did not involve a weapon	1
Simple assault	73

A discussion of minor and serious injury appears on page 6.

Rape/sexual assault

For the 9-year period beginning in 1993, the percentage of rapes/sexual assaults that was completed did not vary significantly depending on the offenders' possession of a weapon. About 71% of rapes/sexual assaults involving no weapon were completed; of such assaults with a weapon, 67% were completed.

Type of weapon	Rapes/sexual assaults, 1993-2001		
	Total	Completed	Attempted
All rapes/sexual assaults	100%	69%	31%
No weapon	100	71	29
Any weapon	100	67	33
Firearm	100	74	26

Note: "Completed" includes rapes and sexual assaults, and "attempted" includes attempted rape. There were too few sample cases for analysis by type of weapon.

Assault

The outcome for incidents of assault is measured by whether a victim sustained an injury as a result of the crime.

Overall, about 1 in 4 assault victims were injured during the incident. Victims of firearm violence were less likely than other victims to be injured. About 1 in 3 assault victims were injured when the offender possessed a blunt object or some unspecified type of weapon. About 1 in 4 victims were injured when the assailant had a knife.

Type of weapon	Assaults, 1993-2001		
	Total	Not injured	Injured
All assaults*	100%	76%	24%
No weapon	100	76	24
Any weapon	100	75	25
Firearm	100	87	13
Knife/sharp object	100	74	26
Blunt object/other*	100	66	34

*Includes victim who did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

**"Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

Table 3. Type of weapon, by gender of victims, 1993-2001

Gender of victim	Nonlethal violent victimization					
	All crime	No weapon	Any weapon	Firearm	Sharp object	Blunt object/other*
Percent						
Male	100%	60.8%	30.5%	11.5%	7.4%	11.6%
Female	100	72.5	20.0	7.0	5.1	7.9
Violent victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older						
Rate						
Male	46.9	28.6	14.3	5.4	3.5	5.4
Female	34.2	24.8	6.8	2.4	1.8	2.7

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*"Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

**Victim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

Victim characteristics

Males, blacks, Hispanics, and those between ages 15 and 24 were more vulnerable than their respective counterparts to violent crime committed by armed assailants.

Gender

Between 1993 and 2001, approximately 1 in 3 male victims of violent crime faced an armed offender. About 1 in 5 female victims of violent crime faced an armed assailant (table 3). Males were twice as likely as females to be confronted by an armed offender

Offender use of firearms

Of incidents involving offenders with firearms, victims —

- were shot (3%)
- were shot at but not hit (8%)
- were struck with a firearm (4%)
- were threatened with a firearm (72%)
- did not describe offender's use of firearms (13%).

(14 versus 7 per 1,000 persons respectively). This pattern was generally consistent across weapon types; for each type of weapon, the victimization rate for males was about twice that for females.

Race and ethnicity

For each type of weapon, victimization rates for whites were lower than those for blacks or Hispanics.¹ Blacks were victimized by offenders armed with guns at higher rates than Hispanics but at similar rates as American Indians. Blacks had similar victimization rates as Hispanics for crimes committed with knives or blunt objects/other weapons.

The rate of firearm violence for blacks was more than twice that for whites (8 versus 3 per 1,000) (table 4). The rate

¹In this report race and ethnicity are analyzed together. White, black, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian refer to non-Hispanic persons.

for Hispanics (6 per 1,000) was about twice that for whites.

No significant differences separated the rates at which whites and blacks were victimized by unarmed offenders.

The rate of armed violence for American Indians (25 per 1,000 American Indians) was —

- 43% higher than the rate for blacks (18 per 1,000 blacks)
- 78% higher than the rate for Hispanics (14 per 1,000 Hispanics)
- 184% higher than the rate for whites (9 per 1,000).

Age, weapons, and violence

For overall violence, persons age 12-14, 15-17, and 18-20 were victimized at similar rates, higher than those for persons age 21 or older (table 5).

Vulnerability to victimization by an armed offender similarly varied by the age of victim. Younger persons, particularly those age 18-20, had higher rates of victimization by armed offenders.

The rate of firearm violence was also highest for persons age 18-20. Their rate (12 per 1,000 persons) was about 40% higher than the rate for persons ages 15 to 17 and 21 to 24.

Except for victims age 12-14, for whom firearm violence constituted about 3% of all violent crime, firearm violence accounted for between 9% and 13% of all violent crime for each age group.

Similarly, crimes committed with knives/sharp objects accounted for 6% to 8%, and crimes with other weapons, 9% to 11% of all violent crime for each age group examined.

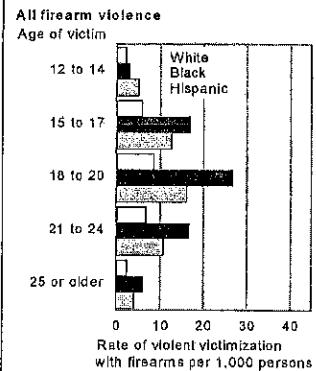
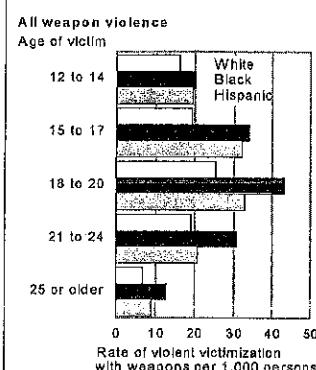
Table 4. Race and ethnicity of victims of violent crime, by type of weapon, 1993-2001

Race/ethnicity of victim of violence	Nonlethal violent victimization					
	All	No weapon	Any weapon	Firearm	Sharp object	Blunt object/other*
Percent						
White	100%	69.4%	22.7%	7.3%	5.7%	9.8%
Black	100	54.2	36.1	17.2	8.4	10.5
American Indian	100	66.8	26.1	8.0	5.0	13.1
Asian	100	58.1	31.2	13.3	8.1	9.8
Hispanic	100	59.3	33.0	14.0	8.5	10.4
Violent victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older						
Rate						
White	39.2	27.2	8.9	2.8	2.2	3.8
Black	48.9	26.5	17.6	8.4	4.1	5.1
American Indian	97.2	65.0	25.3	7.7	4.9	12.7
Asian	20.7	12.0	6.5	2.7	1.7	2.0
Hispanic	42.9	25.4	14.2	6.0	3.7	4.5

*"Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

**Victim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

For each age category, blacks and Hispanics had higher rates of violence than whites — involving a weapon and involving a firearm



Figures 1 and 2

Age of victim	Population	All weapons	Firearm
Total	100%	100%	100%
12 to 14	5	8	3
15 to 17	5	11	11
18 to 20	5	14	16
21 to 24	7	13	14
25 to 34	18	23	24
35 to 49	28	22	24
50 to 64	17	6	6
65 or older	15	2	2

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

Forty-five percent of all armed violence involved victims between 25 and 49, and 38% was against victims age 15-24.

Table 5. Weapons used in violent crime, by age of victims, 1993-2001

Age of victim	All crime	No weapon	Any weapon	Type of weapon		
				Firearm	Sharp object	Blunt object/other ^a
Percent						
12 to 14	100%	77.2%	17.9%	2.6%	6.3%	9.0%
15 to 17	100	67.3	25.1	8.9	8.7	7.6
18 to 20	100	62.6	30.1	12.8	7.1	10.5
21 to 24	100	63.7	28.8	11.9	7.6	9.3
25 to 34	100	64.5	27.4	10.3	8.4	10.7
35 to 49	100	64.9	25.5	9.8	5.7	9.9
50 to 64	100	63.4	24.9	9.1	5.5	10.2
65 or older	100	54.4	30.4	13.1	6.1	11.2
Rates per 1,000 persons						
12 to 14	91.7	70.8	16.4	2.4	5.8	8.2
15 to 17	90.3	60.7	22.7	8.1	5.9	8.7
18 to 20	94.3	59.0	28.4	11.8	6.7	9.9
21 to 24	71.3	45.4	20.5	8.4	5.4	6.7
25 to 34	48.6	31.4	13.3	5.0	3.1	5.2
35 to 49	32.6	21.2	8.3	3.2	1.9	3.2
50 to 64	15.1	9.6	3.8	1.4	0.8	1.5
65 or older	4.5	2.4	1.4	0.6	0.3	0.7

^aOther^b includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

^bVictim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

Race, ethnicity, and age

When race and ethnicity are added to the considerations of age, some differences in victimization rates between age categories emerge for crimes committed with any weapon or with a firearm. Both for crimes committed with any weapon and for firearm violence specifically, differences between black and Hispanic victimization rates were greatest within the age category 18-20 (figures 1 and 2).

Whites and blacks, age 18-20, were more likely than whites and blacks of other ages to have been victims of weapon violence in general and firearm violence in particular.

Hispanics of ages 15-17 and 18-20 were more vulnerable than other Hispanics to violence involving a weapon and violence involving a firearm.

The rates of violent victimization, violent victimization involving a weapon, and violent victimization involving a firearm for persons age 18-20 were approximately 20 times those of persons age 65 or older.

For blacks, whites, and Hispanics, victims of violent crime were, on average, younger than the general population. For the general population

as well as for the victim population, the mean age of whites was greater than the mean age of blacks (table 6).

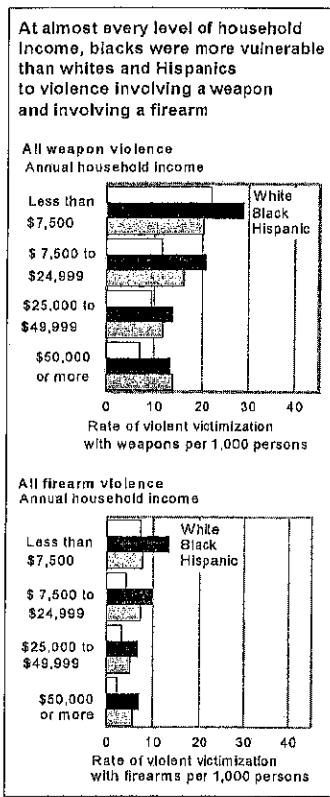
Overall among the victims, blacks were older than Hispanics, the youngest racial or ethnic group considered. This pattern of relative ages was true for victims of violence involving firearms.

Annual household income

Persons with annual household incomes of less than \$7,500 experienced both armed violence and firearm violence at about 3 times the rates of persons with annual household incomes of \$50,000 or more (23.1 versus 7.3 armed victimizations per 1,000 persons, and 8.4 versus 2.4 firearm victimizations, respectively) (table 7).

Table 6. Mean age of victim, by race/Hispanic origin and type of weapon, 1993-2001

Type of weapon	Mean age		
	White	Black	Hispanic
All persons age 12 or older	43 yr	38 yr	34 yr
All victims of violent crime	29	27	26
All weapons	30	28	26
Firearms	32	29	26



Figures 3 and 4

Annual household income and race/ethnicity

Blacks at every income level were more vulnerable than whites to be victims of firearm violence. Whites and blacks with household incomes below \$7,500 were more vulnerable to armed violence than their counterparts with higher incomes.

For violence by an offender with a weapon and for violence by an offender armed with a gun, blacks with household incomes of less than \$50,000 were victimized at rates higher than those of Hispanics or whites with similar incomes.

Weapons and Injuries

For 1993-2001 about a quarter of violent crimes overall resulted in an injury to the victim (table 8). Crimes committed with weapons and crimes committed without weapons were about equally likely to result in victim injury (26%). Crimes committed with weapons, however, were about 3.5 times as likely to result in serious injury as crimes committed by unarmed offenders (7% versus 2%, respectively).

Of all violence with a weapon, the crimes committed with blunt objects/other weapons were the most often associated with victim injury (36%). Twenty-eight percent of the crimes

with knives/sharp objects and 15% of crimes with firearms involved injury.

Offenders armed with knives accounted for 6% of all violence but 24% of all serious injuries — having inflicted serious injury on about 1 in 8 of their victims. About 1 in 15 victims of offenders using a blunt object/other weapon and 1 in 22 victims of offenders with a firearm sustained serious injury.

Type of weapon	Violent crime		
	With/without serious injury	Minor injury	Total
Total	100%	100%	100%
No weapon	66	37	72
Any weapon	26	57	23
Firearm	10	13	4
Sharp object	6	24	4
Blunt object/other	10	20	14
Do not know*	8	6	5

*Victim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

Because completed rape is considered an injury, victims of rape/sexual assault were more likely than robbery or assault victims to be injured, regardless of offender weapon use. For all weapon types, robbery victims were more likely than assault victims to sustain injury.

Definition of types of injuries

Serious injuries include gunshot or knife wounds, broken bones, loss of teeth, internal injuries, loss of consciousness, and undetermined injuries requiring 2 or more days of hospitalization.

Minor injuries include bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, swelling, chipped teeth, and undetermined injuries requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization.

Rape is sexual intercourse forced on the victim through physical or psychological coercion. Forced sexual intercourse means vaginal, anal, or oral penetration by the offender(s), including penetration by a foreign object. Victims can be male or female, and the rape can be heterosexual or homosexual. NCVS defines completed rape as a serious injury.

Rape without additional injuries, for the purposes of this report, were categorized as an injury but not as a serious or minor injury. Cases in which the victim suffered additional injuries were grouped according to the severity of those additional injuries.

Table 7. Annual household income, by type of weapon, 1993-2001

Annual household income of victims of violent crimes	All crime	No weapon	Type of weapon				Do not know ^b
			Any	Firearm	Sharp object	Blunt object/other ^a	
Percent							
Less than \$7,500	100%	60.7%	31.0%	11.2%	8.5%	11.0%	8.3%
\$7,500 to \$24,999	100	63.7	28.3	11.1	6.7	10.5	7.9
\$25,000 to \$49,999	100	66.6	23.8	8.4	5.8	9.7	7.6
\$50,000 or more	100	69.7	22.2	7.4	5.5	9.4	8.1
Rates^c							
Less than \$7,500	74.7	45.3	23.1	8.4	6.6	8.2	6.2
\$7,500 to \$24,999	47.5	30.3	13.5	5.3	3.2	5.0	3.8
\$25,000 to \$49,999	41.0	28.1	9.8	3.4	2.4	4.0	3.1
\$50,000 or more	32.8	23.0	7.3	2.4	1.8	3.1	2.7

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

^aOther includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

^bVictim did not know if the offender possessed a weapon.

^cRates of victimization per 1,000 persons age 12 or older.

Robbery and injuries

About half of victims of robbery by offenders armed with blunt objects/other weapons sustained an injury during the crime.

About a third of victims of robbery by unarmed offenders (36%) and offenders armed with knives or sharp objects (31%) sustained injury during the victimization.

Offenders armed with any weapon other than a firearm inflicted a serious injury during about 1 in 7 robberies that they committed.

Type of weapon	Did assailant threaten before attacking you?		
	All	Yes	No
Robbery*	100%	36%	63%
No weapon	100	35	64
Any weapon	100	41	58
Firearm	100	48	50
Knife/sharp object	100	42	57
Blunt object/other ^a	100	33	67

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

*Includes victims who did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

^a"Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

Victims of robbery by offenders armed with blunt objects/other weapons were more likely than victims of robbery by offenders armed with a firearm to be attacked without a prior threat.

Assault

Victims were injured in a third of all assaults by offenders armed with blunt objects/other weapons. Less than a third of assaults by offenders armed with guns or knives resulted in injury (13% and 26%, respectively). Victims of offenders armed with a knife or sharp object were the most likely to sustain a serious injury; 12% of such offenses resulted in serious injury.

Rape/sexual assault

About half of all victims of rape/sexual assault committed by unarmed offenders were injured, compared to three-quarters of victims of such crimes by armed offenders.² Injuries sustained include completed rape. (See definitions of type of injuries on page 6.)

²The small number of sample cases of rape/sexual assault, the least frequent non-fatal violent crime, prevents further examination of injuries by type of weapon.

Time of incident	All crime	Any weapon	Firearms
Total	100%	100%	100%
Day	54	45	38
Night	46	56	62

Characteristics of the incident***Time of Incident***

Violent crimes at night were more likely than crimes occurring during the day to involve a weapon (30% versus 21%, respectively) or a firearm (12% versus 6%, respectively). Three of every five crimes committed by an offender with a firearm occurred at night.

Type of weapon	Percent of violent crime occurring during —	
	Day	Night
Total	100%	100%
No weapon	71	62
Any weapon	21	30
Firearm	6	12
Sharp object	6	7
Blunt object/other*	9	11
Do not know if weapon present	8	8

^a"Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

Table 8. Injury from violent victimizations, by type of weapon, 1993-2001

Type of crime by type of weapon	All crime	No injury	Type of injuries		
			All	Serious	Minor
Total ^b	100%	74.4%	25.6%	3.3%	21.0%
No weapon	100	73.7	26.3	1.9	22.8
Any weapon	100	73.8	26.2	7.3	18.5
Firearm	100	85.0	15.0	4.6	9.8
Knife/sharp object	100	72.3	27.7	12.7	14.5
Blunt object/other ^c	100	64.0	36.0	6.5	29.3
Rape/sexual assault ^b	100%	46.8%	53.2%	2.9%	21.1%
No weapon	100	48.4	51.6	1.7	19.9
Any weapon	100	24.8	75.2	10.1	35.0
Rape ^a	100	69.2%	30.8%	5.9%	24.9%
Blunt object/other ^c	100	64.3	35.7	3.1	32.6
Knife/sharp object	100	72.8	27.2	8.5	18.7
Firearm	100	83.6	16.4	4.2	12.2
Blunt object/other ^c	100	69.1	30.9	13.5	17.4
No weapon	100	48.9	51.1	13.8	37.3
Robbery ^b	100%	76.5%	23.5%	3.0%	20.5%
No weapon	100	76.0	24.0	1.8	22.3
Any weapon	100	74.9	25.1	7.0	18.2
Firearm	100	87.0	13.0	4.8	8.1
Knife/sharp object	100	74.5	25.5	12.3	13.2
Blunt object/other ^c	100	66.2	33.8	5.6	28.2

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

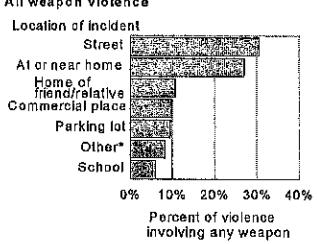
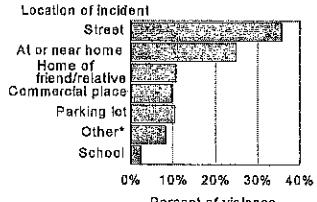
/No sample cases.

^aIncludes rape without additional injuries. All the detail of weapon type for rape would have been based on 10 or fewer cases and are therefore not reported.

^bIncludes victims who did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.

^c"Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

About a third of violent crimes involving a weapon or a firearm occurred on the street away from the victim's home

All weapon violence**All firearm violence**

*Such as open areas, playgrounds (other than at school), or public transportation.

Figures 5 and 6

Table 9. Type of weapon, by victim's activity at time of incident, 1993-2001

Victim's activity at time of the incident	Percent of violent victimizations						Do not know ^b	
	Type of weapon			Do not know ^b				
	All crime	No weapon	Any	Firearm	Sharp object	Blunt object/other ^a		
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Work	18.0	19.8	14.5	15.0	16.0	13.0	14.5	
School	8.5	11.3	2.8	1.1	4.6	3.3	4.6	
Home	22.6	23.8	20.5	18.4	23.2	20.7	17.9	
Shopping	3.8	3.1	4.7	5.6	4.8	3.8	6.3	
Leisure away from home	22.8	21.0	26.9	26.6	25.1	28.4	24.5	
Traveling to or from work	16.9	13.6	22.9	25.4	18.6	23.2	25.0	
Other	7.5	7.4	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.7	7.2	

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

^a"Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.^bVictim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.**Activity and location**

Crime by armed offenders was most likely to occur while the victim was engaged in leisure activity away from home (27%) or traveling to or from work or school (23%) (table 9). Nearly 21% of victims of armed violence were involved in some activity at home at the time of the incident.

The most common location for crimes by armed offenders was on the street away from the victim's home (30%) (figure 5). About a quarter of all violence by armed offenders occurred at or near the victim's home.

About 6% of armed violence, and 2% of firearm violence occurred at a school or on school grounds (figure 6).

Victim-offender relationship

Crimes committed by intimates were less likely than crimes committed by strangers to involve a weapon. The offender was armed in a third of all violence by a stranger and in a sixth of all violence committed by an intimate.

Victims of crimes by strangers were also more likely than victims of crimes by intimates to be confronted by an offender with a firearm (14% versus 5%, respectively).

Victim-offender relationship

Type of weapon	Known non-intimate			Stranger
	Intimates	Non-intimate	Stranger	
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
No weapon	80	75	56	
Any weapon	16	20	33	
Firearm	5	5	14	
Sharp object	4	6	7	
Blunt object/other ^a	7	9	11	
Do not know ^b	4	5	11	

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

^aBlunt objects as well as other objects such as ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects.^bVictim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.**Trends**

Violent victimization rates declined from 1993 to 2001. Rates for crimes committed with firearms reflected a larger decrease than did the rates for overall violence and armed violence in general. Between 1993 and 2001 overall violence decreased 54%, armed violence fell 59%, and firearm violence declined 63%.

The rates of firearm violence for blacks and Hispanics fell relatively more than the rate for whites, 1993-2001. In 1993 blacks and Hispanics were victims of firearm violence at a rate of 13 firearm crimes per 1,000 persons, about 3 times the rate for whites. By 2001 the rate for blacks had fallen to about 4 per 1,000, roughly 2.5 times that for whites. In 2001 Hispanics experienced firearm violence at a rate per 1,000 similar to those for both blacks and whites.

From 1993 to 2001, rates of violence involving firearms declined among all age groups. The decline was greatest among the youngest victims: by 2001, persons age 12-14 had experienced a 97% decrease in the rate of firearm violence, and those age 15-17, a 77% decrease.

Homicide and weapons

Between 1993 and 2001 local law enforcement agencies reported 160,396 murders and nonnegligent manslaughters of persons age 12 or older to the FBI's Supplementary Homicide Reports. (The homicides that occurred in the events of September 11, 2001, were not included.) There was an annual average of 17,822 murders of persons age 12 or older (table 10). A weapon was used in 91% of these crimes. In 4% of the homicides, the offender used a means such as strangling, punching, and kicking. Information about the weapon used was unavailable in 5% of all homicides.

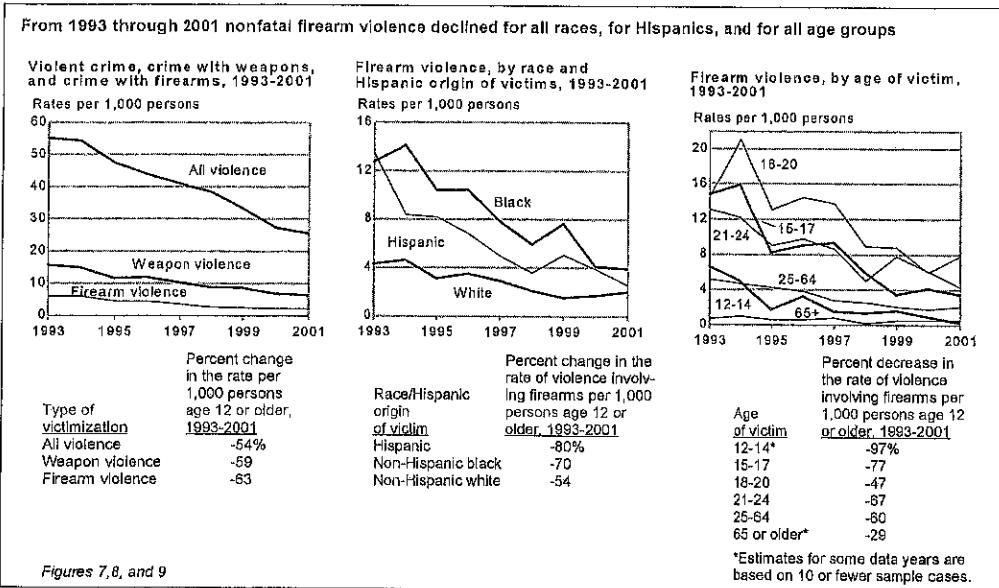
Seventy percent of homicide victims were killed with a firearm. Handguns were used in 56% of all homicides.

Table 10. Homicides of persons age 12 or older, by weapon type, 1993-2001

Type of weapon	Homicide of persons age 12 or older		
	Average annual number	Percent	Rates per 100,000 persons
Total	17,822	100%	8.1
Any weapon	16,207	90.9	7.3
Firearm	12,486	70.1	5.7
Handgun	10,058	56.4	4.6
Shotgun	771	4.3	0.3
Rifle	611	3.4	0.3
Other gun	44	0.2	0.0
Unknown type	1,002	5.6	0.5
Knife/ sharp object	2,406	13.5	1.1
Blunt object	823	4.6	0.4
Other weapon	492	2.8	0.2
No weapon ^a	767	4.3	0.3
Do not know ^b	847	4.8	0.4

Note: Detail may not add to subtotals because of rounding. The homicides that occurred in the events of September 11, 2001, were not included.

^aIncludes hands and feet.^bThe police record did not contain information on the type of weapon used in the homicide.



Figures 7, 8, and 9

Gender

Male homicide victims were more likely than female victims to have been killed by a firearm. Eight in ten male homicide victims were killed with a firearm, compared to 6 in 10 female victims.

Type of weapon	Gender of homicide victim	
	Male	Female
Percent	100%	100%
Firearm	81	61
Knife/sharp object	13	22
Blunt object/other	6	17

Rates*

	Any weapon	Firearm	Knife/sharp object	Blunt object/other
Percent	12	10	2	1
Firearm	81	61	22	17
Knife/sharp object	13	10	2	1
Blunt object/other	6	4	3	2

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. The homicides that occurred in the events of September 11, 2001, were not included.

*Per 100,000 persons age 12 or older.

Knives or other sharp objects were the second most frequently used weapon in homicides of both males and females (13% and 22%, respectively). Males were 5 times more likely than females to be a victim of a homicide committed with a firearm (10 versus 2 per 100,000 persons, respectively).

and twice as likely to be murdered with a knife or other sharp object (2 versus 1 per 100,000, respectively).

Race

From 1993 to 2001, blacks were 12% of the U.S. population age 12 or older but 49% of all homicide victims and 54% of all victims of firearm homicide. Among homicide victims, blacks were more likely than whites to have been killed with a firearm. About 8 in 10 black homicide victims and 7 in 10 white homicide victims died from gunshot injuries.

Race of victim	Population	Homicides	
		All	Firearm
Total	100%	100%	100%
White	84	48	44
Black	12	49	54
Other	4	3	2

Note: Excludes homicides that had unknown race of victim or unknown means of homicide.

Blacks were about 7 times more likely than whites to be a homicide victim (30 versus 4 per 100,000 persons age 12 or older respectively), and approximately 9 times more likely to be a victim of a homicide committed with a firearm (25 versus 3 per 100,000 persons age 12 or older, respectively).

Type of weapon	Race of homicide victim	
	White	Black
Percent	100%	100%
Firearm	72	82
Knife/sharp object	17	12
Blunt object/other	11	5

Rates*	White	Black
Percent	100%	100%
Firearm	3	25
Knife/sharp object	1	4
Blunt object/other	‡	2

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. The homicides that occurred in the events of September 11, 2001, were not included.

*Less than 0.5.

*Rates per 100,000 persons age 12 or older.

Age

Persons age 18 to 24 were victims of homicide overall as well as firearm homicides at the highest rates (table 11). Those age 18 to 24 were 3.5 times as likely as persons age 12 to 17 and about 3 times as likely as those age 25 to 64 to be killed with a firearm.

There appears to be a relationship between the age of the victim and the type of homicide weapon. Victims of firearm murders were, on average, 6 years younger than victims of homicides committed with knives/other

Murders of children under age 12

Weapons in general and firearms specifically were less commonly used against murder victims under age 12 than against those age 12 or older.

From 1993 through 2001, about 2 in 5 murders of children under age 12 involved a weapon, and about 1 in 6 involved a firearm. Among victims age 12 or older, 91% of the

Type of weapon	Murders of persons younger than age 12, 1993-2001		
	Average annual number	Rate per 100,000 persons	Percent under age 12
Total	881	100%	1.9
Any weapon	356	40.5	0.8
Firearm	141	16.0	0.3
Knife/sharp object	40	4.6	0.1
Blunt object	56	6.3	0.1
Other weapon	120	13.6	0.3
No weapon*	399	45.3	0.9
Missing data	128	14.3	0.3

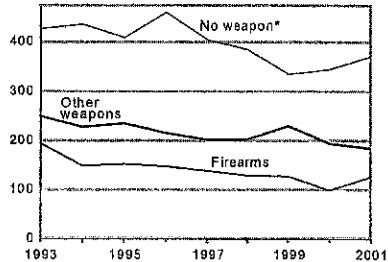
Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Includes hands/fists and feet.

murders were committed with a weapon, and 70% were committed with a firearm.

In 1993 firearms accounted for 19% of murders of persons under age 12. This peak of 195 incidents preceded a decline; in 2001, 15% of all such murders (127 of the 824 total) involved a firearm.

Number of murders of children under age 12



*Includes hands/fists and feet.

Table 11. Homicide, by the victim's age and the type of weapon, 1993-2001

Type of weapon	Homicides				
	12-17	18-20	21-24	25-64	65 or older
Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Firearm	86	88	86	73	46
Knife/sharp object	9	9	10	17	26
Blunt object/other	5	3	4	9	27
Rate*	5	18	18	7	2
Firearm	4	16	15	5	1
Knife/sharp object	‡	2	2	1	1
Blunt object/other	‡	1	1	1	1

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. The nonnegligent homicides that occurred in the events of September 11, 2001, were not included.
†Less than 0.5.
*Rates per 100,000 persons in each age category.

sharp objects (31 versus 37 years old, respectively), and 12 years younger than victims of homicides committed with blunt objects (age 43) (table 12).

period. In 1993, 72% of homicides of persons age 12 or older were committed with firearms. In 2001, 66% were committed with firearms.

Race and age

On average, black murder victims were 5 years younger than white victims (age 31 versus age 36, respectively). The same age difference existed for firearm murders (age 28 versus age 33, respectively). Black and white victims of murders committed with knives or blunt objects were, on average, closer in age.

Homicide of persons age 12 or older

Year	All	Firearms	Percent of homicides with a firearm
Average number	17,822	12,486	70.1%
1993	23,179	16,697	72.0
1994	21,967	15,957	72.7
1995	20,350	14,383	70.7
1996	18,411	12,988	70.4
1997	17,007	12,027	70.7
1998	15,742	10,718	68.1
1999	14,482	9,895	68.4
2000	14,453	9,906	68.5
2001	14,826	9,814	66.2

Trends in homicides, 1993-2001

The number of homicides declined 36% between 1993 and 2001. Firearm-homicides decreased 41% during the

Average rate*

Year	Average rate*	Percent of homicides with a firearm
1993	11.0	7.9
1994	10.3	7.5
1995	9.4	6.7
1996	8.4	5.9
1997	7.7	5.5
1998	7.1	4.8
1999	6.4	4.4
2000	6.4	4.4
2001	6.4	4.3

Percent change in number of homicides

Annual average	-4.8%	-5.7%
Overall, 1993-2001	-36.0	-41.2

*Rates per 100,000 persons age 12 or older. The nonnegligent homicides that occurred in the events of September 11, 2001, were not included.

Table 12. Mean age of homicide victims age 12 or older, by race and type of weapon, 1993-2001

Race of victim	General population age 12 or older		Mean age of homicide victims		
	All homicides	Firearm	Sharp object	Blunt object/other	
Overall	41 yr	33 yr	31 yr	37 yr	43 yr
White	42	36	33	38	44
Black	38	31	28	36	42

Weapons, Juveniles, and school violence	Type of weapon	All	Not Injured	Injured	Of these, 69% were committed with a firearm. Eighteen percent were committed with a knife or other sharp object. Of the firearm homicides at school, three-quarters were committed with handguns.
Annually on average, 1993 to 2001, about 703,800 violent crimes against persons age 12-17 occurred at school or on school property. About 8% of these crimes were committed with a weapon; about 1% with a firearm.	Total	100%	77%	23%	
	No weapon	100	77	23	
	Any weapon	100	67	33	
	Firearm	100	92	8*	
	Sharp object	100	68	32	
	Blunt object/other ^a	100	61	39	
*10 or fewer cases.					
^a "Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.					
All victims	Violent school crime				
All victims	100%				
No weapon	88				
Any weapon	8				
Firearm	1				
Sharp object	3				
Blunt object/other ^a	4				
Do not know ^b	4				
Annual average	703,810				
^a "Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.					
^b Victim did not know whether the offender possessed a weapon.					
About a third of armed assaults in schools resulted in injury to the victim.	Type of student and nonstudent fatalities	Violent deaths at school, 1994-99	Number	Percent	
	Total	220	100%		
	Homicide	172	78		
	Suicide	30	14		
	Homicide/suicide	11	5		
	Legal intervention	5	2		
	Unintentional	2	1		

*10 or fewer cases.
a "Other" includes ropes, chains, poison, and unspecified objects used as weapons.

Between 1994 and 1999, the most recent year of available data, 172 homicides of both students and nonstudents took place at school or on school property in the United States.

Type of student and nonstudent fatalities

Type of student and nonstudent fatalities	Violent deaths at school, 1994-99	Number	Percent
Total	220	100%	
Homicide	172	78	
Suicide	30	14	
Homicide/suicide	11	5	
Legal intervention	5	2	
Unintentional	2	1	

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

^bIncludes shotguns and other "long guns."

^cIncludes blunt objects.

Type of weapon	School homicides, 1994-99	
	Number	Percent
Total	172	100%
Firearm	119	69
Handgun	89	52
Rifle ^d	18	11
Unknown	12	7
Sharp object	31	18
Beating ^e	12	7
Strangulation	5	3
Other	5	3

Note: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

^dIncludes shotguns and other "long guns."

^eIncludes blunt objects.

Source for school homicide data: Anderson, M., and others. "School Associated Violent Deaths in the United States, 1994-99," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Dec. 5, 2001, 286, 21, pp. 2695-2702.

Victim self-defense	All victims' responses to violent crime	100%
Between 1993 and 2001, about 61% of all victims of violent crime reported taking a self-defensive measure during the incident.	Offered no resistance	39.3
	Took some action	60.5
Most used nonaggressive means, such as trying to escape, getting help, or attempting to scare off or warn the offender. About 13% of victims of violent crime tried to attack or threaten the offender. About 2% of victims of violent crime used a weapon to defend themselves; half of these, about 1% of violent crime victims, brandished a firearm.	Used physical force toward offender	13.0
	Attacked/threatened offender without a weapon	10.8
	Attacked/threatened offender with a gun	0.7
	Attacked/threatened offender with other weapon	1.4
	Resisted or captured offender	15.0
	Scared or warned off offender	4.2
	Persuaded or appealed offender	5.5
	Escapedhid/got away	9.8
	Got help or gave alarm	3.9
	Reacted to pain or emotion	0.3
	Other	8.9
	Method of resistance unknown	0.2

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Methodology

Except for homicide data obtained from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program, this report presents data from the BJS National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Between 1993 and 2001 the Census Bureau interviewed approximately 651,750 individuals age 12 or older in 336,295 households. For the NCVS data presented, response rates varied between 93% and 96% of eligible households, and between 89% and 92% of eligible individuals.

Violent acts covered in this report include murder, rape, sexual assault, robbery, and assault (aggravated and simple) against persons age 12 or older. Overall violent crime is a combination of each type of crime.

Hypothesis testing and the NCVS

Standard error computations

Comparisons of estimates discussed in this report were tested to determine if the differences were statistically significant. Differences described as *higher*, *lower*, or *different* passed a hypothesis test at the .05-level of statistical

significance (95%-level of confidence). That is, the tested difference was greater than about twice the standard error of that difference. Comparisons of estimates statistically significant at the 0.10 level (90%-confidence level), have differences described as *somewhat*, *marginal*, or *slight*.

Caution is required when making comparisons of estimates not explicitly discussed in this report. What may appear to be a large difference in estimates may not test as statistically significant at the 95%- or even the 90% confidence level. Significance testing calculations were conducted at BJS

using statistical programs developed specifically for the NCVS by the U.S. Census Bureau. These programs consider the complex NCVS sample design when calculating generalized variance estimates.

Estimates based on 10 or fewer sample cases have high relative standard errors so that care should be taken when comparing such estimates to other estimates. It is inadvisable to compare estimates when both are based on 10 or fewer sample cases. Asterisks mark estimates based on 10 or fewer sample cases in this report.

Comparisons of rates made in this report are based on the unrounded estimates.

Testing trends in weapons violence

Unless stated otherwise when a statement is made describing differences in estimates between years, it was tested for significance using a computer program designed specifically for the NCVS. These tests determine whether

an estimate in one year differs from that of another, regardless of intervening estimate variation.

Definitions of crimes:

Aggravated assault - Attack or attempted attack with a weapon, regardless of whether or not an injury occurred and attack without a weapon when serious injury results.

Rape - Forced sexual intercourse including both psychological coercion as well as physical force. Forced sexual intercourse means, vaginal, anal, or oral penetration by the offender(s). This category also includes incidents where the penetration is from a foreign object. Includes rapes of male and female victims and both heterosexual and homosexual rape. Attempted rape includes verbal threats of rape.

Robbery - Completed or attempted theft, directly from a person, of property or cash by force or threat of force, with or without a weapon, and with or without injury.

Sexual assault - A wide range of victimizations, separate from rape or attempted

rape. These crimes include attacks or attempted attacks generally involving unwanted sexual contact between victim and offender. Sexual assaults may or may not involve force and include such things as grabbing or fondling. Sexual assault also includes verbal threats.

Simple assault - Attack without a weapon resulting either in no injury, minor injury (for example, bruises, black eyes, cuts, scratches, or swelling) or in undetermined injury requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization. Also includes attempted assault without a weapon.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Lawrence A. Greenfeld is director.

Craig A. Perkins, BJS Statistician, wrote this Special Report under the supervision of Michael R. Rand. Tim Hart and Cathy Maston verified the report. Tom Hester and Tina Dorsey produced and edited it.

September 2003, NCJ 194820

PRESORTED STANDARD
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
DOJ/BJS
Permit No. G-91

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Statistics

* NCJ 194820 *

Washington, DC 20531

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300

Bureau of Justice Statistics

Tool Title: NCVS Victimization Analysis Tool (NVAT)

Data source: BJS, National Crime Victimization Survey

Refer questions to: askbjs@usdoj.gov or (202) 307-0765

Number of violent victimizations by weapon category, 1993-2015

Crime Type	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Violent Victimization	16822618	17059005	15202202	14059520	13425406	12010551
No Weapon	11466735	11481149	10467417	9492811	8815403	8444644
Firearm	1529742	1568176	1193241	1100809	1024088	835423
Knife	1102769	1005281	1004865	806846	761373	616358
Other Type Weapon	1453567	1311245	1118324	1317474	1382564	874401
Type Weapon Unknown	212672	260124	208619	147552	155628	238496
Do Not Know if Offender Had Wea	1057133	1433030	1209736	1194028	1286350	1001229

Footnotes:

* Special tabulations from the NCVS Victimization Analysis Tool (NVAT).

* Detail may not sum to total due to rounding and/or missing data.

==

* Due to methodological changes in the 2006 NCVS, use caution when comparing 2006 criminal victimization estimates to other years. See Criminal Victimization, 2006 Technical Notes (BJS Web, I

Report Generated: January 5, 2017 10:32 AM

Suggested Citation: Bureau of Justice Statistics. (Insert table title). Generated using the NCVS Victimization Analysis Tool at www.bjs.gov. 05-Jan-17

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
10600716	8502602	7476599	7424550	7679050	6726060	6947795	8430430	6814183
7280471	5940913	5229123	5265494	5379793	4486700	4785616	5891230	4870345
640919	610219	563109	539973	467345	456512	503534	614406	554780
735971	537262	408244	514780	506402	501148	406105	593866	489177
922779	704755	587015	448424	590245	618224	663167	698305	379776
95154	86509	160924	100261	131687	74543	86225	119287	76686
925422	622944	528185	555618	603578	588933	503146	513336	443419

NCJ 219413, December 2007), Criminal Victimization, 2007 (BJS Web, NCJ 224390, December 2008) for more information.

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
6393471	5669237	4935983	5812523	6842593	6126423	5359570	5006615
4756419	4062658	3547152	4237191	4913935	4554903	3682426	3557322
371289	410108	415003	467927	460718	332951	466113	284910
335740	287564	262957	339789	340551	321139	328774	330204
376297	405677	312252	297987	454144	336470	437260	265372
73310	115049	77321	88719	159708	183810	74753	97355
480416	388181	321299	380910	513536	397150	370246	471452